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MORMON BLOOD ATONEMENT.

IN the thirteen articles of faith of the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints," there is no mention of the doctrine of blood atonement, which Judge Baskin, counsel for the Gentiles of Utah, recently assured a congressional committee had been practically enforced during Brigham Young's reign. In replying, Mr. Jos. W. West, a Mormon, absolutely asserted that he "had never heard of such monstrous doctrine as that of blood atonement." Later on, Mr. John T. Caine, Utah delegate to Congress, indignantly exclaimed :

"A case must be desperate if such statements as these regarding blood atonement can be made. Mr. Baskin has said that Brigham Young was no fool. If you believe that Brigham Young was not a fool, you will believe that it (the doctrine of blood atonement) could only be taken in a figurative sense."

"Blood atonement? Ah, you fancy we mean something awful," once upon a time said a Mormon Elder to me, smiling. "This signifies that the blood of Christ atones for the sins of the world. Then again, the Bible says, 'If a man sheds blood, by man shall his blood be shed.' We don't believe in hanging. That is not shedding blood."

Let us investigate. In 1856 an awful so-called "reformation" took possession of Utah. The leaders under the influence of Jedediah M. Grant, one of Brigham's counselors, went mad on the subject of religion, and called everybody to repentance. All who were not married were hurried into matrimony, and those already married were forced into polygamy. "Blood atonement" was then announced from the pulpit by the prophet and his two counselors. For several years human blood was shed on the slightest provocation. Did one man bear a grudge against another, he died in some mysterious manner. A Mormon court of investigation could never discover how. Was a man obnoxious to any of the church officers, he disappeared, and was never heard of again. John W. Long, a clerk in Brigham's office, the only person who heard the conversation between Brigham and the messenger sent from George A. Smith, just before the Mountain Meadow massacre, and who wrote out the instructions which the messenger carried back, was found dead in a ditch, "drowned" in three inches of water, "accidentally," of course, since that was the decision of the Mormon jury.

"The time is coming," declared Brigham Young in 1856, "when justice will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet; when you shall take the old broadsword and ask, Are you of God? And if you are not heartily on the Lord's side, you will be hewn down."

It was preached throughout the wards that "the good sheep would know the good shepherd's voice, and would follow him, but the goats would not follow him, and they should have their tails cut two inches below their ears!"

The originator of this God-given principle delivered his first sermon on blood atonement on Sept. 21, 1856. After berating the saints in general, he turned his wrath upon "the old, hardened sinners." "They are almost, if not altogether, past improvement, and are full of hell; and my prayer is that God's indignation may rest upon them, and that he will curse them from the crown of their heads to the soles of their feet. I say that there are men and women that I would advise to go to the president immediately, and ask him to appoint a committee to attend to their case; and then let a place be selected, and let that committee shed their blood. We have those amongst us that are full of all manner of abominations, those who need to have their blood shed, for water will not do, their sins are of too deep a dye. You may think that I am not teaching you Bible doctrine, but what says the Apostle Paul? I would ask how many covenant-breakers there are in this city and in this kingdom? I believe that there are a great many; and if they are covenant-breakers, we need a place designated where *we can shed their blood*. . . . We have been trying long enough with this people, and I go in for letting the sword of the Almighty be unsheathed, not only in word but in deed. I go in for letting the wrath of the Almighty burn up the dross and the filth; and if the people will not glorify the Lord by sanctifying themselves, let the wrath of the Almighty God burn against them, and the wrath of Joseph, and of Brigham, and of Heber, and of high heaven. . . . Brethren and sisters, we want you to repent and forsake your sins. And you who have committed sins that cannot be forgiven through baptism, let your blood be shed and let the smoke ascend, that the incense thereof may come up before God as an atonement for your sins, and that the sinners in Zion may be afraid."

Listen next to Heber C. Kimball, another counselor to Brigham:

"If a man has done wrong, tell him to do right for the future and do a good work, and peradventure God will remit his sins and not require any more than a lamb, a pigeon, a calf, or something of that kind as an atonement. But it will require a great many heifers for some of you, and you will find your house left unto you desolate."

In February, 1857, thus spake Brigham Young:

"When will we love our neighbor as ourselves? In the first place, Jesus said that no man hateth his own flesh. . . . Now, if we do rightly love ourselves, we want to be saved and continue to exist. . . . Now take a person in this congregation who has knowledge with regard to being saved in the kingdom of our God and our Father, . . . and suppose that he has committed a sin that he knows will deprive him of that exaltation which he desires, and that he cannot attain to it *without the shedding of his blood, and also knows that by having his blood shed he will atone for that sin and be saved and exalted with*

the gods, is there a man or woman in this house but what would say, 'shed my blood that I might be saved and exalted with the gods?' . . . Will you love that man or woman well enough to shed their blood? That is what Jesus Christ meant. . . .

"I could refer you to plenty of instances where men have been righteously slain, in order to atone for their sins. . . .

"The wickedness and ignorance of the nations forbid this principle being in full force, but the time will come when the law of God will be in full force. This is loving our neighbor as ourselves ; if he needs help, help him ; if he wants salvation and it is necessary to spill his blood on the earth in order that he may be saved, spill it."

So much for Mormon history as reported by Church stenographers. Yet, no less an authority than George Q. Cannon, first counselor to the Mormon President, stated in an interview several years ago, that the "talk about the doctrine of blood atonement originates in the fact that we do not believe in hanging. We think that if a man sheds blood, his blood should be shed by execution." On Sunday evening, October 12, 1884, Elder Penrose, editor of the Mormon Church organ "*The Deseret News*," arose in the Twelfth Ward Meeting-House of Salt Lake City, and preached a sermon on Blood Atonement. He admitted that it was a principle of his religion, but that the time had not yet come to carry it out ! The elder declared that it only applied to such as had joined the Church and apostatized. Why, then, did John D. Lee and the other murderers at Mountain Meadows call upon the Lord to forgive the sins of the one hundred and twenty Gentile men, women, and children, whose throats they were cutting as they called ?

Here, Gentiles, is an admirable illustration of the devious ways of Mormonism. George Q. Cannon denied blood atonement five years ago. High priests repudiated the doctrine to me three years ago. For reasons best known to the Church, one of its cleverest elders publicly avowed the principle in 1884. Now before the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives, one Mormon Elder declares that he "never heard of the monstrous doctrine of blood atonement," and another Mormon Elder, the Utah delegate to Congress, having heard of it apparently, maintains that this doctrine "could only be taken in a figurative sense." An unprejudiced public shall decide whether such an expression as "spilling his blood upon the earth" can be construed figuratively. Mormons insist upon interpreting the Bible literally. They are the

most literal people on the face of the earth. Brigham Young and his holy counselors were the last men in this world to use figures of speech, and that they meant what they said is illustrated in the following story told me by a truthful woman during my residence in Utah.

“When they tell you that they have never blood atoned, they tell what is false,” said one who for years was a Mormon, and whose life has been a prolonged struggle for existence. “Listen to a true story. In London I knew a Mrs. Mansfield, a friend of my mother, to whose boys I gave music lessons. Through Thomas Brown, a Mormon elder, Mr. and Mrs. Mansfield were baptized into what they believed to be the true faith, and Mansfield, when dying, made Elder Brown promise that he would take charge of his wife and children. Brown, who had said he was married, settled Mansfield’s estate, and soon informed the widow that his wife had died. Within two years the elder married Mrs. Mansfield and brought her to Utah, where the poor woman discovered that Brown’s first wife was still living. Taking Mrs. Mansfield down South, he finally brought her back to a broken-down place in Salt Lake City.”

“One Sunday in 1861, on leaving the Tabernacle, I met Mrs. Mansfield in rags and tatters. In England, she wore satins. Mrs. Mansfield had a beautiful daughter ‘Daisy,’ whom Brown was determined to marry. ‘I’d rather see her dead than married to that brute,’ said poor Mrs. Mansfield, but her opposition only made Brown the more determined.”

“‘I intend to marry her, sick or well,’ he declared, when Daisy fell ill, and called upon Heber C. Kimball to perform the ceremony, at which I was present. The unhappy girl was propped up in bed, and when asked whether she accepted Brown as her husband, never replied. A few minutes later Daisy died, and her mother thanked God audibly. Mrs. Mansfield’s conduct was so rebellious that she made an enemy of Brown, and finally sealed her doom by revealing to her boys the secrets of the Endowment House. ‘I shall not live to return to England,’ she said, ‘but I want you to go back and tell our friends, and warn people against Mormonism.’ When Brown accused her of breaking her oath, she did not deny it, whereupon he ordered the boys to go with him to Brigham Young’s for a settlement of the property.”

“Soon after, the boys came to me with terror-stricken faces.

‘Oh,’ they cried, ‘you can’t imagine what we’ve got to tell you. We were deceived. Brown took us to a place where something was thrown over our faces. Then we were conducted down stone steps into a room lighted with candles. There they brought poor mother almost naked. We were asked whether she had told us about the Endowment House, and we said “no,” but Brown contradicted us. They cut mother’s throat and disemboweled her before our eyes, and then told us to leave the Territory in twenty-four hours, or we’d be treated in the same way.’”

“There was no time to be lost. I dressed the boys as country girls, put old sunbonnets on their heads, gave them a letter to an Englishman named Low, who had apostatized and lived on a ranch in Idaho, and had them safely conducted as far as the Warm Springs, three miles out of town. Those boys never were heard of. The next day —, who had been concealed in the currant bushes about my house, said to me: ‘It’s a very good job for you to have let those boys go, for if they had remained over night you would all have been murdered.’”

“I came from England in 1860, when sixteen, because I had a sister here whom I wanted to persuade to return. I was fond of traveling, and I accompanied an English family I knew. We had a comfortable carriage, and had a splendid time crossing the plains. It was like a pleasure party. Once over, I found it almost impossible to get back. Brigham Young insisted upon my marrying—and in those days you had to do as you were told. I never was a good Mormon, and when I went through the Endowment House I kept my mouth shut. I was a second wife. My husband had been a Danite, and one night I followed him, and saw things I ought not. The Mormons suspected me. In 1872 I was invited to a surprise party, and made up my mind to go, when the wife of a leading man begged me to stay at home. ‘If you go you’ll never get home alive,’ she said. The night was very foggy, so I dressed in father’s clothes, took a stick and walked out. Presently in a dark place I recognized two men, one a relation. After going round the block, I returned home.”

“In 1876, the Mormons were so afraid I’d help Judge Howard, in ferreting out dubious matters, that I was constantly followed when I went out. One day I met Judge Howard, and he wanted me to give evidence about some people in California. If they were implicated in the affair under consideration at the time, I’m

sure they obeyed orders from the Church, and left the country in disgust, and to escape detection. A man was brought back, gave the necessary information, and was sent home again. The Mormons didn't know what I'd say to Judge Howard, and wanted me out of the way. In July of '76, while visiting a friend, I was asked by her to try some water from her new well, which I did, but it had such a peculiar taste that I drank very little. That little, however, made me feel so ill that I went home and sent for the doctor. I had been poisoned with corrosive sublimate."

"The woman who had given me the water came to see me early the next morning, saying, 'I've been thinking about you all night.'"

" 'Well you might,' I replied."

"Then she confessed how terribly she felt, and how she had been ordered to poison me. She was a good woman, and I'm sure she wouldn't do such a thing now."

"Besides owning property, my husband has an income of \$250 a month. I don't live with him, neither does his first wife. He has a third, who was a hired girl. I am allowed one dollar sixteen cents and four mills a week for the support of my two children, whom I am educating out of the Mormon Church. We have relations in England of good position, and if we go back I do not want to be ashamed of my children. Most Mormons don't care how their children are raised; I do. Don't use my name; I've suffered so much that I have no more spirit to fight. I must earn my living, and I'll make no more sacrifices."

After these significant quotations, and after this equally significant sketch from life, I think the public will agree with me that either Brigham Young, the prophet, his counselors, and the editor of "The Deseret News," are liars, or blood atonement is a principle of the Mormon faith. Behold the two horns of the dilemma. To my way of thinking, "God's people" are impaled upon both.

KATE FIELD.